THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS: (SHRI M.M. JACOB): (a) and (b) According to information available, some terrorists fired on a passenger train on June 15, 1991, near Railway Station Badowal on the Ludhiana-Ferozepur section killing fifty passengers. On the same day another group of terrorists fired on a train at Railway Station Kila Rai Pur on the Ludhiana Takhal section killing 25 passengers.

(c) to (e) The State Government have paid on ex-gratia grant of Rs. 50,000/- to the next of kin of 23 persons killed, and is making payment to the legal heir of one other victim on receipt of details. In 25 other cases, the victims belonged to other States and the State Government are ascertaining particulars about their legal heirs from the District Magistrates concerned. 17 persons killed were Punjab Government employees and payment of ex-gratia and other relief under the service Rules are being made by the respective departments concerned. The remaining 9 persons have not been identified.

[Translation]

Temporary Workers in Telephone Department

3901. SHRI RAM AWADH: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of temporary workers employed in the Telephone Department;

(b) the number of workers belonging to Scheduled Castes/ Scheduled Tribes among them;

(c) the number of years for which those workers have been working in the Department;

(d) whether the Government have any scheme to make them permanent in the Department;

(e) if so, the details thereof; and

(f) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI P.V. RANGAYYA NAIDU): (a) to (c) The information is being collected from field units and will be laid on the table of the House.

(d) Yes, Sir.

(e) Yes, Sir, on availability of requisite number of Group 'D' posts.

(f) Does not arise.

[English]

Outcome of talks held during Maldives meet of SAARC

3902. SHRI DHARMANNA MONDAYYA SADUL: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the issue of establishment of Nuclear Free Zone in South Asia was discussed during the recently concluded SAARC Standing Committee of Foreign Secretaries Meet at Maldives;

(b) if so, the outcome thereof;

(c) whether the Foreign Secretary held any talks with his Pakistani counterpart during the Meet; and

(d) if so, the outcome thereof?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI MADHAVSINH SOLANKI): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) The two Foreign Secretaries discussed bilateral issues, including the schedule of meetings leading to the Fifth Round of Foreign Secretary level talks. India's Foreign Secretary expressed concern about Pakistan's propaganda on the Kashmir issue and its efforts to internationalise it. It was also pointed out to Pakistan that its assistance to terrorism directed against India continued unabated. India's Foreign Secretary touched upon but did not discuss in any substantive details, the Pakistan Prime Minister's recent proposal for a five nation conference to discuss nuclear non-proliferation in South Asia.

(See 197-A to 197-C)

Meeting of the SAARC Council of Ministers at Maldives

3903. SHRI SHRAVAN KUMAR PATEL: SHRI SARAT CHANDRA PATTANAYAK: